

For correspondence that indicating the author is opposed to 404c action, please use the following:

I appreciate your writing to me about recent correspondence the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has received regarding the proposed Pebble Mine. To date we have received many letters from people who have interest in this issue and are requesting that the EPA use its authority under Section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act to prevent the opening of the proposed mine. *[Insert personalized sentence such as: As you noted we received a letter from the Bristol Bay Native Corporation requesting that we limit the use of our authority to state lands where the proposed mine is located. We have also received letters, like yours, from those who support proceeding through the federal and state permit processes before we would initiate a Section 404(c) action.]* We are interested in hearing all perspectives on this and all issues.

As you probably know, EPA has been a leader among federal agencies in collaborating with native villages throughout Alaska. EPA understands the economic limitations that exist in remote parts of Alaska. As a result, we are dedicating considerable resources towards alleviating the environmental and economic disadvantages that often accompanies isolation from the infrastructure and economic engines of the State.

Currently, we are gathering and reviewing initial information to make a determination whether exploration of the issue through a 404(c) process is in fact warranted. We have not made a decision, but we want to reassure you that any decision will be based on the best available science and modern mining practices. Please also be assured that in all actions EPA intends to take, we will fulfill our obligation for government-to-government consultation with all native villages that might be affected by our actions.

If you have questions, concerns or wish to share additional information, please contact Mr. Rick Parkin, Acting Office Director for the Office of Ecosystems, Tribal and Public Affairs. Rick can be reached at (206) 553-8574. *[If requesting a meeting with Dennis, please use: "If you would like to come to Seattle and meet with me about this issue, please contact my assistant, Matt Magorrian at (206) 553-1234 to schedule a meeting.]*

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Dennis J. McLerran

Regional Administrator

For correspondence that indicates the author is for 404c action, please use the following:

I appreciate your writing to me about our potential regulatory actions regarding the proposed Pebble Mine. To date we have received many letters from people who have interest in this issue and are requesting that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) use its authority under Section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act to prevent the opening of the proposed mine. We have also received letters, like yours, from those who support proceeding through the federal and state permit processes before we would initiate a Section 404(c) action. We are interested in hearing all perspectives on this and all issues.

Congress created both the 404(c) process and the federal permitting process when it passed the Clean Water Act in 1972. The 404(c) process was created both as a check on the permitting process to ensure that aquatic resources that provide critically important economic and ecological functions are protected, and as a means for preventing the undue expense of engaging the permit process in places where aquatic resources are too important to risk. EPA is currently evaluating available information to determine whether such an action is warranted. Please be assured that initiation of a 404(c) process is not a decision to prohibit mining at the proposed Pebble Mine site, but a commitment to explore the issue. If we begin a 404(c) process, we will conduct a public process that includes consultation with tribal governments and opportunity for the public to provide information and comment.

If you have questions, concerns or wish to share additional information, please contact Mr. Rick Parkin, Acting Office Director for the Office of Ecosystems, Tribal and Public Affairs. Rick can be reached at (206) 553-8574.

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Dennis J. McLerran

Regional Administrator